

Candidate Screening Call Guide

A values-grounded screening tool for community-rooted organizations. Adapt the role details, logistics, and questions to fit your context. The framework and structure belong to The Tapestry.

PURPOSE OF THIS CALL

This is not a courtesy conversation. It is a gate. You are assessing whether this candidate is worth the panel's time and whether they are genuinely ready to show up in this work. You are also the first real experience they have of who your organization is. Both of those things are true at the same time.

By the end of this call you should be able to answer three questions:

- Does this person have the operational experience the role actually requires?
- Do they have enough awareness of values-grounded work to be assessed against your framework?
- Are there any hard logistics or compensation misalignments that should end the process now?

CALL DETAILS

Candidate Name	
Date	
Call Length	20 to 30 minutes
Facilitated by	
Position	
Salary Range	
Reporting to	

OPENING | FIRST 2 MINUTES

Use these exact beats to open the call. Keep it warm and brief.

"Thank you for making time. I'm [your name], I manage People and Culture at [organization]. This call is about 20 to 30 minutes. I'll share a bit about the role and the organization, ask you a few questions, and leave time for yours at the end. Nothing we cover today is scored. This is a conversation to see if it makes sense to bring you in front of our panel. Sound good?"

Then in 60 to 90 seconds name these three things:

- Who your organization is and what it does. Brief. One to two sentences.
- What this role is and why it matters to the mission.
- That you work inside a values framework. Name it plainly. Tell them the panel will go deeper.

SECTION 1 | HARD LOGISTICS | ASK FIRST, EXIT EARLY IF NEEDED

These are not disqualifiers on their own but misalignment here ends the process before it wastes anyone's time. Ask all three before moving on.

1. This role is [X] days in our [location] office each week. Is that something you can commit to consistently?

Do not soften the ask. State the in-office requirement clearly. If they hedge significantly, note it.

Strong Signal	Watch For This
Affirms clearly without negotiating it down. May ask about schedule flexibility, which is fine.	Tries to negotiate the in-office requirement before they even have an offer. Vague or conditional answers.

Notes:

2. The salary range for this role is \$[X] to \$[X]. Placement in that range is based on experience and internal equity. Does that range work for you?

State the range plainly. If they ask where in the range they would land, it is fair to say that is determined through the process based on experience.

Strong Signal	Watch For This
Confirms the range works and moves on. May ask a clarifying question about how placement is determined.	Names a number above the top of the range or expresses the range is a dealbreaker. Document and close the call gracefully.

Notes:

3. This role does have occasional evening or weekend work for organizational events, maybe fewer than ten times a year. There is compensatory time for those instances. Is that manageable for you?

This is a real condition of the role. State it plainly.

Strong Signal	Watch For This
Acknowledges it without alarm. May ask how much advance notice is typically given, which shows planning instinct.	Reacts with concern or tries to negotiate it out entirely before understanding the scope.

Notes:

SECTION 2 | EXPERIENCE | CAN THEY DO THE WORK

These questions assess whether their actual experience matches what this role requires. Listen for evidence, not claims.

4. Walk me through what [relevant work] has looked like for you in your most recent or relevant role. What were you actually managing day to day?

Let them talk for 2 to 3 minutes. You are listening for whether their actual scope matches this role, not whether they use the right buzzwords.

Strong Signal	Watch For This
Names specific systems, responsibilities, or relationships. Can describe what happened when something broke.	Speaks only in general terms. Cannot name specific tools, processes, or responsibilities. Describes work much narrower in scope than this role requires.

Notes:

5. This role involves [specific technical or operational requirement]. How does your experience with that compare to what we're describing?

You are checking whether they have actually done this, not whether they are enthusiastic about learning it.

Strong Signal	Watch For This
Has navigated this kind of work and can speak to real decisions, challenges, or systems. Does not have to know your specific tools but should have transferable experience.	Has only surface-level exposure. Cannot describe a time they actually managed this kind of work at scale. Overstates comfort.

Notes:

6. Tell me about a time you had to manage competing urgent priorities with limited bandwidth. What did you do and what did you let go?

You are assessing their real prioritization instincts, not their ability to say they work hard.

Strong Signal	Watch For This
Names a specific situation. Makes a clear decision about what to let go and can explain the reasoning. Does not pretend they solved everything.	Says they never let anything go or makes it sound like they simply work harder. Cannot name a specific example. Tells you what they think you want to hear.

Notes:

7. This role requires [specific scope or scale requirement]. Have you managed anything at that scale?

This is about scope readiness. You are checking whether they can imagine doing this work at the volume and complexity this role requires.

Strong Signal	Watch For This
Has managed work at a comparable scale. Can describe a system they built or improved to handle volume.	Has only managed a much smaller or simpler scope. Cannot imagine how to handle the volume. Does not ask any clarifying questions about the scope.

Notes:

SECTION 3 | VALUES AWARENESS | CAN THEY BE ASSESSED BY THE PANEL

You are not asking them to demonstrate full framework fluency. You are checking whether they have enough orientation toward values-grounded work to be meaningfully assessed in the panel. Two questions are enough here.

8. This organization does its work inside a [values] framework, which means how we manage [operations/programs/people] carries the same values accountability as our mission work. What draws you to this kind of work in a mission-driven organization specifically?

You are not grading their answer against your principles. You are listening for whether they have thought about the connection between their role and the mission at all.

Strong Signal	Watch For This
Names something specific about wanting their work to matter beyond task completion. Can articulate why they are here and not in a comparable role elsewhere.	Cannot make any connection between their role and the mission. Describes the organization as just a job. Seems surprised that values would show up in their kind of work.

Notes:

9. Roles like this one often mean enforcing policies or holding process standards with people who are stretched thin and sometimes frustrated. How have you navigated that tension without compromising the process or the relationship?

You are listening for their instinct, not their credentials.

Strong Signal	Watch For This
Acknowledges the tension honestly. Describes a real situation where they held a boundary while staying relational. Does not choose one at the expense of the other.	Says they have never had real conflict in this kind of work. Defaults to deferring to whoever pushes back. Or describes enforcing rules rigidly without regard for relationship.

Notes:

SECTION 4 | CANDIDATE QUESTIONS | LAST 5 MINUTES

Leave at least five minutes for their questions. What they ask tells you as much as what they answered.

Questions That Signal Genuine Interest	Questions Worth Noting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asks about the team they would support and what those people need Asks about what success looks like in the first 90 days Asks something specific about the mission Asks about the biggest challenge in this role right now 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asks only about schedule, benefits, or remote flexibility Asks nothing at all Asks questions that suggest they did not read the job description

Their questions and what they tell you:

CLOSING THE CALL

"Thank you for your time today. I enjoyed this conversation. Our process from here is that I'll be in touch within [X business days] to let you know whether we're moving forward. Either way, you will hear from me. Is there anything else you want me to know before we close?"

Do not tell them your decision on the call. Even if you are certain. The decision is documented first.

P&C DECISION RECORD | COMPLETE IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CALL

Do not wait until the end of the day. Complete this while the call is fresh.

Hard logistics clear?	Yes	No	Notes:
Compensation range confirmed?	Yes	No	Notes:
Experience level match?	Strong	Partial	Weak
Values awareness present?	Yes	Some	Not Evident

One thing they said that stayed with me:

Any concern that must be on record before this candidate advances:

Advance to Panel	Hold / Follow Up Needed	Do Not Advance
Logistics clear. Experience matches. Values awareness present. Worth the panel's time.	One area needs clarification before a decision. Document what and when you will follow up.	Hard logistics misalignment, clear experience gap, or values concern the panel cannot address.

Decision:

Reason:

P&C Signature

Date

This document becomes part of the hiring file. File in your HR system under the candidate record.

Part of The Tapestry framework. rhonnarose.com